DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 294 950 UD 026 178

AUTHOR	Sizemore, Barbara; And Others
TITLE	Developing Effective Instructional Programs.
INSTITUTION	California Univ., Los Angeles. Center for the Study of Evaluation.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Nov 87
GRANT	OERI-G-86-90003
NOTE	26p.; In: Making Schools Work for Underachieving Minority Students: Next Steps for Research, Policy, and Practice. Proceedings of the Conference, see UD 026 176.
PUB TYPE	Speeches/Conference Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Academic Achievement; *Bilingual Education; Bilingual Students; Black Culture; Black Students; *Educational Improvement; Elementary Secondary Education; Equal Education; Family School Relationship; High Achievement; Limited English Speaking; Minority Group Children; Principals; *Program Development; *School Effectiveness; Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Education; Underachievement; Urban Education
IDENTIFIERS	California; *Collaboratives; Empowerment; Hispanic American Students

ABSTRACT

A group of three conference papers, all addressing effective instructional programs, is presented in this document. The first paper, entitled "The Organization--A Viable Instrument for Progress" (Barbara Sizemore), addresses the subject of high-achieving, predominantly black elementary schools. Routines in these schools not present in low-achieving black schools are identified. Principals in high-achieving schools changed the structure of the school and the attitudes of the teachers to adapt to the needs of black students. The second paper, "Equity, Relevance, and Will" (Kati Haycock), asserts that equal opportunity does not exist: schools that serve minority children have fewer resources than other schools, and tracking often sorts minorities into lower ability groups. Minorities, therefore, are often not as well prepared for college as are their majority counterparts. Components of high-achieving schools are identified. Principals should be allowed to bring about change, and schools should build leadership teams to help minorities succeed. The third paper, "Effective Instructional Approaches to Bilingual Education" (Fred Tempes), describes the California State Department of Education's attempt to implement a consistent pedagogy across bilingual programs in California. The positive and negative effects of bilingualism are examined. Non-English speaking students in five schools learned all their subject area material in Spanish, and were gradually taught in English. The program appeared to be successful. (BJV)

ED294950

PROMISING PRACTICES

Developing Effective Instructional Programs

Barbara Sizemore
University of Pittsburgh

Kati Haycock
Achievement Council of California

Fred Tempes
California State Department of Education

UD 026 178

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Lisa Siegel
Center for the Study of Education

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PROMISING PRACTICES

The Organization - A Viable Instrument for Progress

Barbara Sizemore
University of Pittsburgh

I want to talk to you about higher achieving, predominately Black elementary schools.

When I first went to Pittsburgh in 1977, I interviewed Black parents, and I asked them which Black elementary schools in Pittsburgh had the highest achievement. The parents would look at me like I was crazy for asking such a dumb question, and they would say, "There's no such thing as a high-achieving Black school, but if you want to know the best school . . ." They would name the school, and I would visit it.

I also tried to find out if there were any people in the Bedford housing project who had their children in private schools, and I found out that some did. I interviewed these parents and went to the private schools, and I found that Black children in a couple of these private schools were actually achieving less than children at the Robert L. Van Elementary School, which was the public school for the housing project.

I went back to the first families that I had interviewed, the families with children in public schools, and I told them what I had found. They didn't believe me, they wouldn't believe the facts. I thought this was a very serious problem. Why should schools that are really accomplishing something keep trying, if people don't believe that they are doing a good job?

I got some money from the National Institute of Education to study three high-achieving and three low-achieving Black schools. What I had in mind was an ethnographic study, I wanted to describe and compare the routines in the schools. But the superintendent at that time said, "Oh no, you can't do that, because all of my people are working hard in my schools." And I said, "Yes, but in some of the schools where the people are working hard the kids are learning, and in other schools where they are working hard, the kids aren't learning. So I wonder what your people are working hard at." He

replied, "You can't do this, the morale of my school system would degenerate if you did a report like that." I asked to look just at the high-achieving schools, but he didn't even want to do that.

I asked him some more questions about this and that, and discovered something about the high-achieving Black elementary schools in Pittsburgh. The school officials were really embarrassed about the high performance of these schools because the performance raised questions about the lower achieving schools.

When the parents found out the truth about Robert L. Van Elementary, they got angry and said, "What's the matter with kids at the Wilder school?" This was one of the low-achieving elementary schools. It was a legitimate concern, and I suggested that they take their questions to the superintendent. They did, and this created tension in the school system. And tension is healthy because it usually brings about change. Change was what was necessary to narrow the achievement gap between African-American students and White students in the Pittsburgh elementary schools.

The Van Elementary School is ninty-nine and nine-tenths Black. The children in this school come from families that are eighty percent single-parent, female-headed families. The children live in public housing and ninty percent qualify for free and reduced lunch. This is a school that is Black; this is a school that is poor.

In 1976, I discovered that the seventh graders at Van Elementary--at that time it had seven grades--were the second highest achieving seventh graders in the Pittsburgh public schools. They were the second highest achieving group of seventh graders and no one knew it. Not even the teachers in the school knew it. That's how well this secret was kept.

Over a ten year period, the Robert L. Van School had been persistently in the top left quadrant, the quadrant that indicates the high achievers. Van Elementary had always been up there, surrounded by White schools, just like the fly in the buttermilk. The school district officials just erased it, they took the fly out and dropped it.

Since Van Elementary had been up with the high-achieving schools, I thought perhaps there were other schools up there, too. In 1979-80, I looked at the twenty-one elementary schools that were

identified as seventy-five percent Black, or more. I used a very modest criteria for this study. I considered any school to be a high achiever if it had fifty-one percent of the Black students achieving on the national norm for standarized reading and mathematics tests. I found five schools that fell within my criteria. I was given money to study three, so I chose the three highest achieving. They were Madison, Beltshoover, and Van Elementary Schools.

In 1980, Beltshoover was the highest achieving Black elementary school in the city of Pittsburgh. Seventy-one percent of the children scored at or above the norm on the NAT in reading and seventy-two percent scored at or above the norm in mathematics. When I published my study, the Black school board members really got fired up, and they went to the superintendent and told him some changes had to be made. However, there were only two Black members on the Board of Education. One of them was my husband. As fate would have it, the other Black school board member didn't really know he was Black; we couldn't count on his support. We appealed to him in many ways. We spent a lot of time trying to persuade him to see our point, but he just would not do it. We then resolved that we were going to have to do something else, so we found someone to run against him. He was defeated, and that gave us two votes.

We had another seat that represented the African-American majority in the community, but the man was apathetic, he had just given up. We had to convince the people he represented to act on their own behalf and put someone else in that seat. That was a really hard job, trying to convert that apathetic Afro-American community to one that believed politics could make a difference in their lives. We kept meeting and meeting and talking and talking, and six people finally said that they would run for election. We told them, "No, six people can't run. If six people run, the White folks will get the seat back because you'll be dividing up the votes."

These six said, "We decided to run and now you tell us we can't run. What is wrong with you all, don't you know what you're doing?" We locked up those six people in a room and told them that only one could come out. They sat in there and argued and argued. Three of them came out and said, "We're quiting." The other three came out and said, "We're running." We said, "Nope, go back in there. You can't come out until you decide which one of you is going to run." One more drops out, he had to go home to dinner. The other two were

eyeball to eyeball and neither would give. Both were going to run; they were adamant.

We had to find out which of the two was the weakest candidate. We followed one around for twenty-four hours and then confronted him with "Gary Hart evidence." He got out, and that gave us one candidate. Needless to say, we won the seat and that gave us three votes. That was the most Black votes we could get.

My husband said we had to get a White candidate who would vote with us. Fortunately for us, there was a section of the city that was represented by a man who was easy to defeat. This seat was in a racist middle class neighborhood--the people were what I call closet racists. They were racists at home but not at work. We had to try and run our candidate's campaign so that the Black people could help her, but so the White people wouldn't know it. Those of us who sounded White on the telephone made calls and the rest of us licked stamps and things like that. We got her elected. That gave us four votes, which meant that we only had to lobby for one more vote.

We had learned in previous political campaigns that it is just as hard for White people to stick together as it is for Black people. We had to wait until one of the White board members needed my husband's vote. Finally that happened. One of the White board members approached my husband and said "Jake, I need your help." He said, "You've got it, if you fire the superintendent," and she replied, "You have my vote." That's how we got the new superintendent, Dr. Richard Wallace.

Since Dr. Wallace has been there, our school system has been a different school system. We have only one school that is below the fiftieth percentile for standarized testing in reading, and only two schools that are below the fiftieth percentile in math.

What is exciting to me is the number of schools that are now closing the achievement gap. Last year at the Madison School, eighty-one percent of the children achieved at or above the norm in reading and seventy-nine at or above the norm in mathematics. At Van, eighty-four percent exceeded the White norm in reading. At Van, eighty-four percent reached or exceeded the White norm in mathematics. We had five other integrated schools where the African-Americans exceeded the White norm. In all, we had five integrated schools and two all-Black schools that exceeded the White

norm last year. Exceeding the White norm in our system is our priority goal.

Our new superintendent has also created a school improvement program. The director of the program, Dr. Louis A. Vincent, was the principal of the Beltshoover School. He has taken twelve schools and elevated their achievement. When I put my daughter in the Miller Elementary kindergarten magnet program, that school was at the bottom of seventy-one schools in terms of achievement. Miller is an all-Black school, one hundred percent Black and one hundred percent poor. Nearly all the kids live in public housing, and ninty percent of them come from single-parent, female-headed families. In April of 1986, seventy-three percent of the children scored at or above the norm in reading and seventy-five percent scored at or above the norm in mathematics.

This is what is happening in the Pittsburgh public schools now. It is a result of political action. You can't do anything in the Pittsburgh school system without five votes, I don't care who the superintendent is. If you don't have five votes on the school board, nothing is going to happen. Action really has to start with the school board if you want policy or priority changes in your school system.

My research and the School Improvement Program was based on Grim T. Allison's Organizational Process Model, which says that an outcome in any organization, institution, or government is the routines that go on within it. A routine is a series of activities that are designed to reach a goal. A series of routines is a scenario and a series of scenarios is a process. If your school is low achieving, it is low achieving because of what the students, teachers and administrators do in the school. If you want to change an outcome, you have to change the routines. You can't expect to get a new outcome doing the same old thing. That's what my research says.

I found a set of routines in the high-achieving Black elementary schools that were not present in the low-achieving Black schools. I found assessment routines, placements routines, pacing routines, monitoring routines, measurement routines, discipline routines, instructional routines, self-development routines, evaluation routines, and decision-making routines. These routines created an environment in which teachers could teach and students could learn. The attitude of the principal who established the

routines was the most important aspect of the organization in the high-achieving schools. The principal had high expectations for all of his performers and demanded competence from teachers and students alike.

There has been a lot of talk about teacher participation in decision-making. That's fine if the teachers know what they are doing. It is not fine if they don't, or if the research is applied in schools where teachers actually resent high performing minority children because they interfer with their biases. Before teachers can operate in the best interests of African-American children, or Hispanic children, or any minority children, two things have to happen.

First, teachers must understand the subject being taught, from the concepts to the principles that hold the subject matter together. Then they must understand the cultural background that these kids bring to the teaching-learning situation. They have to understand the experiences that the students bring into the classroom. Walk into classrooms all over African-America and you can find teachers saying "Five goes into twenty-five how many times?" The African-American child processes this and says, "Goes into?" He thinks and answers, "5 goes into 25, 30." He looks at the answer and finds he is wrong. What this indicates is that the teacher doesn't understand division herself, because division is successive subtraction. If you want to teach division conceptually, you don't say "five goes into," which is adding. You would say, "How many times does five come out of twenty-five?" The student would processes that information, and he would understand the concept.

This is a problem we must confront. We have to be sure teachers understand what they are teaching. There are many teachers of all sizes, colors, and shapes in the United States of America who do not understand reading. They don't know how to teach it, they don't understand it themselves. I don't know how they learned to read. And there are teachers who don't understand mathematics. So many minority children are crippled because teachers don't understand what they are teaching.

At the University of Pittsburgh, I've had minority students in algebra who have trouble with negative numbers. A student will come to me and say, "I don't understand this, I have to get out of here. My GPA will be shot, I'll lose my money, and my mamma will

kill me. I'm quiting this algebra stuff." I say, "What do you understand about mathematics?" The kid says, "I understand money". I say, "Fine, I am going to loan you five dollars," and the kid says, "OK." Then I say, "How much money do you have?" "I got five dollars." "No, that's my five dollars." The kid says, "Well I don't have anything." "You got my five dollars." The kid will scratch his head a while and then say, "Oh." So I say, "Now, if you spend my five dollars, what state are you in?" "I'm five dollars in the hole." "Right, you are worse off than zero." He says, "Yeah. I'm behind the eight ball." I say, "That's a negative number. Right?"

That illustration is about understanding the concept yourself and plugging it into the experience of an Afro-American student. An explosion takes place in the student's learning, and he understands what you are talking about. But, that's not what always happens in schools, because some teachers are bound by three false beliefs about minority group performance. The first is that minority students are genetically inferior. The second is that minority students are culturally deprived. Who ever heard of any living, breathing human being that doesn't have a culture? And third, that there is something wrong with the families of minority students. In other words, if you don't have a daddy in the house, you can't read.

Some teachers use those statements as a defense to justify not giving African-American children the best instruction possible. The routines that I found in the higher achieving black elementary schools were routines that dealt with this type of problem. Teachers were not allowed to think those things, much less practice them. Of course, many people say to me, "You have to change the attitudes before you can get anything to change." That's not necessarily so, at least not in the schools that I looked at.

I should have known this from when I was a superintendent. I stopped smoking when I was a superintendent, and I took up all the ash trays. Someone would come in the first time, smoking, and he would look around and say, "Excuse me, Mrs. Sizemore." He would leave the office, put out his cigarette and come back in. That person didn't smoke in my office anymore. His attitude about smoking didn't change, but he didn't smoke in my office because it was structured for non-smoking. Of course, I did have some board members who would put their cigarettes out in my plants, but I couldn't do anything about that but grin.

If you change the structure, the behavior will change and attitudes will follow. That is what the principals did in the high achieving elementary schools. They changed the structure, and the attitude of the teachers changed. As the children in those schools began to perform better and better, the teachers lost their beliefs that they couldn't learn.

Another thing these principals did was to provide a cultural impact on these schools. It is interesting for me to visit schools that are predominately Hispanic or African-American when they are empty. If I don't see any Hispanic or Black heros on the wall, or Hispanic or Black families, or Hispanic or Black cultural art, it makes a big statement. Because culture is the total of artifacts that a group uses in its struggle for survival and autonomy and independence.

We are a mixed up nation, more mixed up than most people want think or admit. That mixture ought to be reflected in the curriculum that we teach. We should teach the children the truth about every cultural group's struggle for survival and independence. It is not good for White kids to grow up thinking they are part of a superior race who discovered and invented everything that is considered good in this world, because that is not true. We will never be able to eliminate racism in this world as long as we go on teaching White kids this magnificent lie. They believe it, and so do a lot of minority people. Both groups act on these lies as though they were the truth.

All of us know that a lie will not stand. The truth will always rise. We should be dedicated as researchers and educators to the truth, and that is what we should always support. If we do not, then who are we?

PROMISING PRACTICES

Equity, Relevance, and Will

Kati Haycock
Achievement Council of California

Promising Practices for Developing Effective Instructional Programs. A lot of people interpret titles like that as suggesting that minority youngsters need something quite different from other youngsters. The notion here somehow is that we educate all kids the same. But somehow, black kids, brown kids and poor kids don't learn as much.

That's a serious misconception. The fact of the matter is, that we do not educate all children the same way. Into the education of minority and poor youngsters we put less of everything that we believe makes a difference in terms of quality education. We put in less instructional time. We put less in the way of well trained teachers. Less in the way of rigorous higher order curriculum. Less in the way of interesting books. Perhaps most important of all, we put less in the way of teachers who believe students can learn.

So how does this happen? What about equal opportunity: don't we have equal opportunity? No, we don't, and it occurs primarily in two ways.

The first way is that despite what we thought had happened with Brown vs. (Topeka) Board of Education and the numerous desegregation decisions that followed it, we continue to educate most minority youngsters separately from other youngsters. The amount of racial isolation that we see in our state has actually increased over the last several years. Why is this important? It is important because the schools that serve minority youngsters have fewer resources or resources of a lesser quality than other schools. They tend to have poor facilities, broken down buildings, boarded-up windows. They have less experienced teachers. They have unbalanced curricula, especially at the secondary level: balanced away from college preparatory subjects in the direction of what at best might be considered vocational or quasi-vocational in nature.

For those minority kids whom we don't get in this way, we have another practice, and that's called grouping and tracking. We get those students by sorting them into lower ability groups and educating them quite differently than we do other students. Those in the lower groups, as all of us know, get educated primarily by ditto. Ditto after ditto after ditto, throughout elementary and high school years.

It's hardly surprising, as a result of these two practices then, that no matter what index of academic achievement you use, minority students show up on the bottom. And the longer those youngsters remain in school, the wider the gap grows. Here in California, at the first grade level we see very few, if any, differences in actual achievement between minority youngsters and other youngsters. Generally, no more than about ten percentage points.

By the time those youngsters reach sixth grade, the gap has grown quite a bit larger. Many times on the order of about thirty percentage points. By the time those youngsters reach the twelfth grade, if they reach the twelfth grade at all, they've fallen enormously behind. In many California school districts, you'll see gaps of about sixty percentage points on tests like CTBS between the average Anglo youngster and the average black or Hispanic youngster.

Many, of course, do not graduate and among those who do, there are very, very few high-quality post-secondary opportunities. A recent study of California schools suggests that blacks and Hispanics who graduate from high school in California attain eligibility to enter one of our four-year public institutions at about one-quarter the rate of the average Anglo graduate.

Once they enter our four-year institutions, what happens? Typically, because their levels of preparation are considerably lower, they wash out of college at higher rates.

The cumulative effect of all of this is that what comes out of our education systems looks very, very different from what went in. Those who are prepared for white-collar professions are disproportionately Anglo and from affluent homes. Those who are prepared, at best, for blue-collar jobs are disproportionately minority and from poor families.

Not a pretty picture considering we've been at all of this for about twenty-five years.

The question we asked, however, was: Is all of this inevitable? All of us have, of course, heard the success stories. Stories about schools that take the kids nobody else seems to think can learn and somehow manage to produce striking achievement gains.

When we looked at the data for California, we found that some schools were doing a much better job than others at educating minority and poor students. Some schools were doing a much better job at helping them to prepare for or gain entry into good four-year colleges. Some were doing a better job at helping them to prepare for and find good jobs. Some were doing a better job of helping them to prepare to achieve at or above grade level.

But in all of that, the basic answer to our bottom line question was very, very clear. Minority and poor youngsters can achieve at the same high level as any other youngster in this nation. And schools absolutely <u>do</u> make a difference in whether that happens or whether that does not.

We looked carefully at the schools where students were achieving at much higher levels. What is it that made them different?

First and perhaps foremost is a determined principal. What we saw at successful schools around the state was not always the classic turnaround principal style. But we always saw determined school leaders: leaders who believed not only that kids <u>could</u> learn at the highest levels, but that they had to learn at the highest levels. And that determination was clear in everything those leaders did.

The second thing we saw was a clear focus on academics throughout the school -- a quality instructional program. What are the pieces of such a program? I want to give you a few hints from what we've seen around California.

The first is bound up in the notion that all students should be in grade level materials. It's interesting what a simple, but controversial, proposition that is. I was talking the other day to a principal from a junior high school in Oakland who was telling me

that for years the children in her school, most of whom were black, had performed at very low grade levels. Typically those who entered at grade seven had fourth grade level skills. And the response to that, as the response nationally tends to be, was to put them in fourth grade level readers.

While they were doing that, they wondered why those kids never improved - why they never achieved at grade level. And finally it dawned on them: they didn't achieve at grade level because they were never exposed to grade level materials. So what they decided to do, in one fell swoop, was to put all kids in grade level materials.

They provided them with a lot of help after school: they provided them with some help during school. In one way or another, they made sure that kids who were having some difficulty got help. What happened? Scores went up tremendously, students felt better about themselves. The school has soared. A very simple idea, but surprisingly, rarely used.

Second, especially at the elementary level, we need to look carefully at what kind of books we use. A lot of studies have come out recently suggesting that in the inner city, our tendency is to use considerably less rich materials than we use elsewhere. Books at the first and second grade level tend to introduce about half as many new words as books that are used in the suburbs. That choice of books alone makes a major difference in what kids learn. We need to look at getting the richest possible materials in order to have a quality instructional program.

Third, schools that succeed tend to have virtually all of their students, in a common core curriculum, and a rigorous curriculum at that. They have very, very few branches to divide students. One thing both experience and the literature tells us: when you confront youngsters with a choice, to go the next highest class or go to less difficult class, poor kids will almost always opt into the lower class.

The more branches you have, the more often you push kids apart and the less likely low-income children are to learn. By reducing those branches in your curriculum - or where you must have branches, by reexamining standards for entry and by pushing as many as youngsters as possible up into the higher curriculum rather than allowing them to choose on their own - schools are more

likely to give more kids the kind of education we know makes a difference in terms of achievement.

Fourth, the schools that work have figured out that educators don't communicate very well across level. What happens in many cases is that kids don't do well in a particular subject because they didn't get through the requisite chapter in the previous year. And the teacher never knew that. By bringing teachers together across level within discipline, to talk about what kids need to know and what those teachers need to do together to make sure they learn it, we generally get a much more closely sequenced curriculum and a better learning process for the student.

Fifth, as is probably obvious in the concept of a core curriculum, there is much more heterogeneity in classrooms in schools that work than there is in schools that don't. The general rule of thumb is: Even if you can't mix kids across achievement or ability levels all the time, the more you do of that, the more likely you are to have improved achievement. This is especially true if your teachers are trained to use available instructional strategies like cooperative learning.

Sixth, there's also something to the very simple notion that you get what you ask for, you get what you demand. What we see in successful schools' programs is teachers who demand a lot from their students. High expectations are something we talk about all the time, but how they are translated in effective schools is into demands. Many times when we talk to the teachers about what they ask of kids -- because we've seen that they're asking so much more in successful schools of the same age kids as is the case elsewhere -- they say that they too had not been convinced kids could master these kinds of things. But the teachers found that the more they asked, the more the kids delivered. So that their own expectations kept rising, and the kids kept learning more. Again, a very simple notion, but a very powerful one.

Finally, there is the matter of parent communication. There has been a lot of talk about parent involvement in education. There are lots of things that generally come to mind when we talk about all this, including volunteers in classrooms and increased attendance at back to school nights. But the one thing that's not commonly discussed is communication from the school to the home about how the youngsters are doing in school. The fact is that parents cannot

help their kids if they don't know until the semester mark, or at least until the halfway mark, that their children are having difficulties. Successful schools have found that if they communicate with parents more regularly, if parents know early on that the youngsters are having some difficulty, even the poorest families, and the families with the least education, will somehow find ways to get their youngsters some help.

None of these are terribly difficult. They're all things where one can sit down at a school site and figure out how to proceed. The sad fact, however, is that there aren't very many schools where these things are in place. There are not very many exceptions to the general patterns I mentioned earlier. Our own organization is engaged in an effort to try and change all of that. We've decided to focus on several strategies that you may wish to consider as well.

One is to help more principals to become the leaders that they need to be in order to bring about change. Our own vehicle for doing this is what we call "Principal-to-Principal," which is an institute with a faculty of eighteen principals from high achieving, predominately minority schools that come to UCLA for a four day period and teach sixty other principals (we hope a hundred this year) the steps to school improvement. They'll work together over the coming year to help each other with the problems schools encounter in the turnaround process. This is one way, but there are certainly others, of helping principals to undertake the very difficult task of taking a low-performing school and pushing, shoving, pulling it ahead. We need to provide more principals with that kind of help.

The second way that we've chosen is to help schools build leadership teams. For as critical as a determined principal may be, successful schools generally have a committed leadership team that involves other administrators and a number of teachers. All team members are committed to changing their schools, and all are knowledgeable about the school improvement process. This, of course, is the participatory decision-making we hear so much about. I think all of us are well aware that not very much that could be labeled participatory decision-making goes on in schools today. Schools tend to be little fiefdoms where teachers close the door and teach, and administrators close their own doors and manage. That needs to be broken up. Teachers and administrators must see as <u>their</u> responsibility the need to improve achievement among

minority and low-income kids. Our Teams Institute, which brings school teams to UCLA for 4-days, is making an effort to do just that.

A quick aside about categorical programs. One of the very sad outcomes of our extensive use of band-aid, add-on programs for providing assistance to minority and poor students is that in the minds of many so-called regular teachers and administrators, these kids are no longer their responsibility.

I can't tell you how many schools we visited, schools typically sixty or seventy percent ethnic minority, were we would ask the principal or vice-principal, "What are you doing to raise achievement among your minority and poor students?" And we would get in response either a blank stare, or a finger pointed to the trailer across the playground that housed the compensatory education reading lab, or another comment about the University of California coming on campus one day a week to talk to thirteen of our kids about going on to college. What we didn't hear is, "This is our school plan. This is how we've retooled our curriculum, this is how we've retrained our teachers, these are the kinds of decisions we have collectively made about what kids belong in what kinds of classes."

This is a serious problem for all of us. We simply must help regular classroom teachers, regular administrators, to come once again to the notion that motivated many of them to come into the classroom, the belief that they can change things for kids that need their help. We need to rekindle that feeling, that sense of responsibility for change.

In my view, if we can help more administrators and more teachers to regain that sense of responsibility - if those of us who are in higher education,.and other places can help them with assistance in the way of ideas, available research on what works and what doesn't, even a shoulder to cry on, we can help to bring about the flood of activity that will bring about the gains that we need for minority and poor young people in this country.

PROMISING PRACTICES

Effective Instructional Approaches to Bilingual Education

Fred Tempes
California State Department of Education

I am from the California State Department of Education, and right now I'm in charge of our Office of Staff Development. However, prior to that I spent eight years in the bilingual education office, and I think that is why they asked me here today to talk about bilingual education and effective instructional approaches.

Effective instructional approaches in schools need to be based on some rationale, but often they are not. Bilingual education programs are a good example. If you go into a school and ask about the bilingual program, you might be directed to a particular classroom where one teacher has been successful with bilingual students. But there may be another teacher in the same school who takes a different approach, yet has a good class too. The first grade teacher may believe one thing, but the second grade teacher doesn't, so he does something different. Nobody gets together to talk about why they are doing what they are doing, and, as a result, kids go through a hiccup approach to education. Good, effective instructional approaches are based on some sort of rationale. I want to tell you how we attempted to implement that idea in bilingual programs in California, specifically in five California elementary schools.

Seventeen years ago, twenty-seven percent of the school age population in California was made up of minority group members. In 1980, that increased to forty-two percent. Coming up on 1990, we anticipate that it will be forty-eight percent, and by the year 2000, the minority will be the majority in our public schools.

Language minority students, students who have a home language other than English and who come from a home where another language is spoken, make up twenty-five percent of the student population in California--one in four. Twelve to thirteen percent of the students in this state are officially identified as having limited English proficiency--one in eight. Our problem is what to do for these kids, and I think that we may want to do something different. We need to look at the routines and practices that we are

using in our schools and decide whether they are appropriate. In the elementary school project, we used a decision-making model in which outcomes are a response to instructional treatments or instructional treatment factors. Additionally, some outcomes occur because of the interaction between what is done in school and the kinds of kids who are coming to school.

One of the mistakes we have made in the past is that we wanted the kids to be different than they were. They didn't speak English, but we pretended they did. We treated them as if they spoke English. Obviously, what kids bring to school is a reflection of their community. If they come from a non-English speaking community, they probably won't speak English. If they come with some excess cultural and psychological baggage, they are going to have certain attitudes about the school system. All of those factors need to go into the mix. The things we have available to us in terms of instructional statements are related to educational background factors. Some, such as how much money we have in the school, turn out to be relatively minor. Other things are more important, like the attitude of the superintendent, the principals, and the teachers, and also how well informed our instructional decisions are.

When we started our program with the five schools, we asked the teachers what they wanted to have happen for their limited English proficient kids. They all came up with the following answers, and invariably, groups I talk to always do:

"We think these kids should speak and understand English." This is always the first response. I ask, "Is that all that you hope for these kids as a result of the instructional intervention you are talking about, that they can speak and understand English?" someone raises his hand and says, "We think they ought to do well in school, beyond grade level." There are a few gasps from the back of the room. "Well, maybe close to grade level." Their second concern is that students ought to adjust well to living in this multicultural society. Minority students should not feel that they have to reject some aspect of their backgrounds or reject participation in the majority culture.

Just knowing where you want to go, though, doesn't tell you how to get there. This is where we need to bring in some of the available information that often is not used to make instructional decisions. At the State Department of Education, we are neither researchers or

practitioners. We are in between, and that is a good place to be. Researchers can tell us what they are doing, and since most of us have been practitioners, we feel we can interpret some of their findings for school people.

We have tried to do that in bilingual education with a series of books that we have published over the last six or seven years. The first book, "Schooling and Language Students," was followed up with "Studies on Emerging Education" right at the peak of the English-only movement. Our most recent publication, "Beyond Language," deals with non-language related factors in the education of limited English proficient students.

Publishing books is one thing, but really culling out the instructional approaches to it is another. We synthesized all this information and presented to the schools what we felt informed research was saying about the education of language minority students in the United States. We boiled the information down into five principles: what the theory of bilingual threshold is; what language proficiency is; how language proficiency in one language relates to another language; how kids acquire a second language; and how non-language factors influence the education of language minority students.

The threshold hypothesis examines the theory that bilinguals are more, or less, intelligent because they are bilingual. Do they suffer or do they gain some kind of academic advantage? Research is contradictory, but there has been some work that looks at the type of bilingualism involved and has really cleared up the question. Basically, we posited three types of bilingualism.

The first, limited bilingualism, occurs when a student has less than native proficiency in two languages. This student comes to school speaking a language that everyone says is not important. He is told to forget that language and learn English, so he tries to pick up the second language. Then, one day in the third or fourth grade, he realizes, "Gee, I really can't speak English, or write English, or read English as well as everyone else, and I can't speak Spanish, or read Spanish, or write Spanish as well as everyone else, either." This is subtractive bilingualism. A kid loses proficiency in one language while he is trying to play catch up in another. These kids seem to suffer negative affects associated with their bilingualism.

The second type of bilingualism is partial bilingualism, which is often the result of typical foreign language programs. Students study a language for three years, and can order a meal in a French restaurant anywhere outside of Paris or get a beer in Encinada, but it doesn't really affect their academic achievement.

Proficient bilingualism, the third type, is much more interesting. The research supports the notion that people who are at equally high levels -- native or nearly native -- of proficiency in both languages seem to gain some academic and cognitive benefits that are associated with their bilingualism. In other words, they do better on certain tasks than do monolingual students of either language.

A more crucial issue for us in California, and the one we were concerned with when designing an instructional approach for LEP kids, is the question of limited bilingualism. When kids come to school speaking Spanish and are convinced that they must drop Spanish and catch up in English, we find that these kids are two and three years below grade level by the sixth grade. We have to do something to prevent this loss of Spanish while students acquire English; students need to be able to do some tasks in Spanish at the same time. In order to get any kind of positive benefit from the instructional approach you choose, you must get beyond those thresholds.

The second principle concerns the dimension of language proficiency. Basically, language proficiency, in our view and based on the research, can be defined as the language ability necessary to complete a task found in one of four quadrants. The quadrants are defined by how difficult the task is, how cognitively demanding or undemanding the task is, and how much context there is for the task. I always give this example about the first grade student who has been in California only two weeks, and speaks only Spanish:

The teacher says, "Boys and girls, I want you to put your math books away and line up for lunch," and this little kid is the first in line. The teacher turns and says, "See how fast Juanito is learning English. He's only been here two weeks, and he's learned a lot of English." What did Juanito hear? Those who have had this experience as young children know exactly what he heard. He heard a bunch of noise. But Juanito knows that it's 11:30 in the morning, he's starting to get hungry, and the math books have been out for

awhile. The teacher stands up and says something, and all the kids close their math books and line up for lunch. He knows he can excel at that last task, so he gets in line first. This is a context imbedded task.

A context reduced task, the other end of the continuum, occurs when the entire message is imbedded in language. Reading is an example. If a students picks up a journal article he's not familiar with and reads it without anyone giving him instruction, it is a context reduced task. Everyone acquires the basic language proficiency to complete context imbedded, cognitive undemanding tasks in some language. This is not the problem. The problem accompanies the context reduced task.

Not everybody develops the ability to complete cognitively demanding tasks in context reduced situations to the same degree. This is true among native speakers of English. Give them the CTBS or MAT test at the end of the sixth grade and their scores will be all over the map. The same is true for language minority students. We made a big mistake in California, and we are probably still making it in some places today. We assumed that when kids could complete context embedded tasks in English, they were no longer in need of any specialized instructional programs. They could defend themselves on the playground, they could ask permission, they could take home a note from the teacher, have it signed, and return it to the teacher. Based on their ability to do these things, we predicted that they were ready to do context reduced tasks.

This was not true. What the research showed was that it takes kids two to three years to learn how to do this type of task. It takes them five to seven years to approach grade level norms in terms of cognitive academic proficiency. That presented a problem. We weren't sure we had the resources to go five or six or seven years, the time needed to increase proficiency. However, there was another bit of research that helped us out.

There are two views about the way bilinguals process informatio: The first asserts that there is a common underlying proficiency, the second asserts that there is a separate underlying proficiency. With a separate underlying proficiency, the two languages are like two balloons in the brain, with the first language represented by L1 and the second language, English, by L2. If you want to develop English language proficiency, you must teach in

English. You blow up the L2 balloon. If you spend time instructing in the first language, you inflate the L1 balloon, taking up space that kids could be using to process English. Teaching in a language other than English is a waste of time.

Most of the public believe that this is true. Letters to the Los Angeles Times say, "What is this about teaching kids in Spanish? If they want to succeed in the U.S. they need to know English. You need to teach them in English." All of these people believe that teaching in the first language has no eventual influence on English skills and only take up valuable time.

The other view maintains that there is a common underlying proficiency. Academic skills learned in one language are readily expressed in a second language once a student has gained initial facility in the first. Once kids know how to read in Spanish, they will be able, by and large, to read in Englis. All they need, then, is to be able to speak English.

There is no research that supports the first view. Many research studies support the second, and this is what convinced the teachers that we work with. Kids who do well in one language do well in a second language. Kids who do poorly in their first language do poorly in their second language. If we can help them to do better in their first language, they will eventually do better in English. Our research and our project studies support this.

The fourth point deals with second language acquisition. We looked at the research on second language acquisition and it seemed to be divided into two schools of thought. Proponents of one think language should be taught sequentially, based on the introduction of specific grammatical skills. Kids learn this language, then the next. If any of you had a foreign language in high school, you probably were taught by this method. First you learned present tense forms. Next you learned personal pronouns, and you put the two together. The instruction was grammatically sequenced. After three years of putting the little blocks together you should have been able to speak that language. How many of you speak that language now?

The other school of thought says that second languages can be acquired the same way first languages are acquired. This research is based on the work of Steve Prashen, at USC, and others. Prashen talks about comprehensible input and non-grammatically sequenced

input, input that is meaningful and supported by lots of contextual clues. The research indicated that this second method was the way to go.

The fifth point relates to the status of kids. Kids who don't speak English in California are, for the most part, minority students. Minority students suffer from unequal status in the classroom. Teachers interact differently with minority and majority students. They interact differently with kids who have accents and kids who don't. The high status kids get all the attention. Teachers don't ask kids who don't speak English to answer questions because they don't want to embarrass them. There is a status ranking in class, and it is reflected by the peer group. Minority students pick up on that fairly soon, in kindergarten or first grade, and they may not talk in class for a number of years.

There are certain status characteristics in our society, including ethnicity, dress, ages, and language. People tend to rank those things in a hierarchy based on their previous experiences and attitudes, and behave differently towards people as a result. When kids don't speak English, they don't ask as many questions. That behaviour, in turn, influences outcomes which reinforce the status characteristics, and around and around we go.

We tried to break that pattern up in the schools we worked with, and had, I think, some degree of success. Teachers were trained in cooperative learning. Tracking begins in elementary school, and we wanted to break that up. We placed perceived high-ability kids and perceived low-ablility kids in the same group. The input of everybody is valued, so that helps to break up the status ranking. We also trained teachers to give Maria the same amount of time to answer as every other student, to give the low achievers the same amount of time as the high achievers, and to move around the room and talk to all of the kids. These teaching methods are inequitably distributed in most schools. Teachers don't do it consciously, but it has been documented over and over and over again.

We put all of these points into an instructional program. The end product, the instructional design, addressed kids in four phases of language instruction: non-English speaking students; limited English kids who had been in the program a couple of years; kids

who were more proficient but were still limited English; and fluent English proficient students.

Non-English speaking kids learned all their subject area material in Spanish. Language arts were taught in Spanish, math was taught in Spanish, science, health, and social studies were taught in Spanish. A little bit of ESL was incorporated for these students, using a natural approach or an approach not based on grammar, as the research suggested. Then, we treated them as if they were native speakers of English in art, music, and P.E., because the context level in those areas is so high. This gave us a chance to integrate them with native speakers of English, which didn't usually happen in other classes.

As the kids gained more proficiency, we started to move some of those content area classes into sheltered English. We taught math and science in English, but we taught it in a special way, with many contextual clues and a lot of teacher paraphrasing and built-in redundancy, using slower rates of speech. Often we didn't integrate the kids with native speakers; we kept them with non-native speakers because, I tell you, English is a powerful tool. If ten non-native speakers of English are put together with two native speakers, the teachers will teach to the native speakers. It is the register they are most familiar with. The other kids get lost.

In the third phase, we started to move more subjects into sheltered English and math and science into mainstream English. By the time students were in fourth grade, most of the kids were in phase four, and everything was being done in mainstream English. We also encouraged the schools to maintain some academic use of Spanish. These kids were already four or five years down the road to becoming proficient bilinguals, and if there are intellectual advantages to proficient bilingualism, as the threshold hypothesis suggests, why should students forget Spanish?

The results of this program, which will be reported in another paper, were fairly encouraging. The five schools did very well. Some of them did exceptionally well, including the one in Los Angeles. Los Angeles has replicated this program, I think, in seven or eight schools. The last time we counted, there were about 25,000 students enrolled in spinoff programs from the model we developed for these five schools. The same kind of instructional design was used because

it was based on sound research, the best research available at the *time*.

To conclude, there are some things I would do differently if we were to start this project again. I would have greater faith in the research that we synthesized and I would not move so rapidly from Spanish to English. We found that the more things we taught in Spanish and the higher our expectations were in Spanish, the better the students did in English. I also would make greater changes in the organizational structure of the schools. I think if we had changed the decision-making process, we would have started to address some of the many other issues that are related to the achievement of language minority students.

Other than that, I think we are on the right track. When you design an effective instructional program for minority children or for underachieving children, it must be based on some rationale, and someone has to be able to make the rationale explicit. People don't necessarily have to agree with the underlying rationale, but they need to be informed by a principal who is an instructional leader, and who will say, "You are free to disagree, but you are not free to do something else in this school, because this is where we are going."